

THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH, POLSTEAD



Photo: Bill Wigglesworth

Norman Arch at St Mary's
(one of the 100 Treasures in the Diocese's 2014 Centenary celebrations)

ANNUAL REPORT 2013 – 2014

REVIEW

2013-14 was another good year for the Friends of Polstead Church, during which we were able to consolidate our resources before the PCC embarks on several major projects during this year and next. These projects include the electrification of the clock and the refurbishment and re-gilding of the clock face, work on the stonework of the tower and major repair works on the roof beams of the side aisles.

Meanwhile, the final element of urgent maintenance works on the church woodwork was completed; and, during the current year, work has begun on continuing the repairs to the churchyard wall which were started four years ago.

The Friends has continued to enjoy strong support, with generous donations from an impressive number of residents in Polstead and others elsewhere. After substantial expenditure, our total cash reserves ended the year at £37,730.19 and our membership continues at well over 100. The PCC has asked us to pass on its most grateful thanks to all the Friends who do so much to support the conservation and maintenance of St Mary's Church.

HONORARY PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENTS AND OFFICERS

The following held office during the year.

Honorary President: Toby Owles

Honorary Vice-Presidents: Dr Ronald Blythe
Henry Engleheart
Sir Simon Jenkins

Executive Committee: Bill Wigglesworth (Chairman)
Lea Blackham (Treasurer)
Dr Roger Bray
Professor John Gorrod
Caroline Mansfield
Jane Oldrey
Jackie Mitchell (representative of the PCC)
Father Adrian Mason (*ex officio*)

Independent Examiner: Luke Potter (Treasurer of the Friends of St Mary's, Preston)

Committee Members and Honorary Officers

Caroline Mansfield reluctantly decided to step down from the Committee due to other commitments. The PCC elected Jackie Mitchell as its representative member on 5 April 2015. All the other elected honorary officers on the Committee and other elected Committee members offer themselves for re-election at the Annual General Meeting.

Independent Examiner

Roger Huggett was replaced as Treasurer of the Friends of Preston St Mary Church by Luke Potter, who kindly agreed to act as Independent Examiner in Roger's place.

MEMBERSHIP

During the course of the year, to 31 October 2014, the number of individual and joint members of the Friends has remained at 115. A full list of members at 31 October 2014 is on page 7 of this report.

The Committee is most grateful to everyone who has supported the Friends and continues to encourage all who have an interest in the preservation of St Mary's Church, Polstead, and its surroundings to become members.

FINANCE

In the course of the year, the Friends received £14,492.00 in donations income and £1,374.86 from fund-raising. In addition to those, listed below, who have made membership donations, the Committee would also like to thank those who have made additional personal donations. Gift Aid tax repayments were £1,140.07 and £17.86 interest was received on the deposit account, bringing the total income for the year to £17,024.79.

Grants to the PCC during the year were £6,196.62 in total, resulting in a surplus for the year of £10,233.17, after £779.86 net surplus on fund raising and trips, leaving total cash reserves of £37,730.19 carried forward.

The Committee would like to congratulate everyone associated with this continued excellent financial performance and to thank, in particular, our major donors and especially the executors of the estates of the late Mary Field-Reid and the late Marie Parry-Crooke for the magnificent bequests that are enabling us to fund the two major projects on the church clock being carried out by the PCC in their

memory. A summary of the accounts for the financial year ended 31 October 2013 is on page 6 of this report.

CHARITABLE STATUS

As a result of its charitable status, the Friends is able to reclaim Gift Aid on donations where this is mandated. This is of considerable assistance in raising funds for the preservation of the church and so helping to maintain our heritage for the benefit of the community, the general public and posterity. It is the Committee's policy to encourage the mandating of Gift Aid as much as possible, together with the payment of annual donations by standing order to minimize administrative costs.

The elected members of the Executive Committee constitute the Trustees of the Friends, in accordance with modern charitable practice.

ACTIVITIES

Committee

The Executive Committee met three times during the year to discuss the development of the Friends and its activities. The Chairman would like to express his personal thanks to the members of the Committee for their continued strong and helpful support.

Social Activities

The Annual General Meeting in April 2014 was once again combined with the annual supper, after which Charlie Haylock gave a fascinating and very entertaining account of the development of the English language and its relationship with East Anglian dialects and how these in turn were related to dialects around the world..

Our annual trip in September was to Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes. This was, of course, the scene of the codebreaking activity that was of overwhelming importance to success in the Second World War but which, for national security reasons, had to remain secret for many years. The extensive, and most impressive, series of exhibitions in the main house and the surrounding grounds, which tells the story of many aspects of this immensely successful undertaking, kept the visiting party enthralled all day. We again teamed up with supporters from the parishes of Leavenheath, Nayland and Stoke by Nayland, in the PentAccord benefice in order to broaden the opportunity and help to fill the coach.

The Committee decided to continue holding the AGM in May, to take advantage of the light evenings. The annual supper party will coincide once again with the AGM, which is being held on Friday 8 May (see details below).

Fund Raising

Net funds of £779.86 were carried forward from the AGM and the annual trip.

Publicity

The Friends continued to publicise its purpose and activities, through the brochure, a poster which has been on display in the church, the Community News and the Polstead website (www.onesuffolk.co.uk/polsteadpc; or just Google “Polstead”).

Grants to the PCC

The following grants were made to the PCC during the financial year.

- (1) *Water and drainage to kitchen facility*: £1,632.00 was paid for the ground works for this project.
- (2) *Installation of washing up facility*: £3,209.82 was paid for internal installation, plumbing, wiring and associated works and professional services.
- (3) *Repair and maintenance of guttering and downpipes*: £2,280.00 was paid for preparation, repair and repainting of guttering.
- (4) *Woodwork repair and maintenance*: £706.80 was paid for repair and maintenance of the south door to the chancel, charity boards and the nave dormer windows.

Future programme

Current projects

The Friends has undertaken to assist with the cost of the projects currently being undertaken or commissioned, including the rebuilding of the west wall of the churchyard (continuing the earlier work on the north wall) and, with the aid of greatly appreciated special bequests, the electrification of the clock and refurbishing of the clock face and re-gilding of the clock hands and numerals.

Longer term projects

The PCC continues to give priority to the maintenance and conservation of the church building. The major project in immediate prospect is the repair of the side aisle beams, the cost of which will require the Friends to draw on the major projects reserve that it has been accumulating over recent years. It is now hoped that it may be possible to proceed with this work over the next two years.

Further external projects include the repair of a number of chamber tombs, which are an important element in the churchyard to the north of the church, and the resurfacing of the path to the south door of the church, possible alternative treatments of which are currently being reviewed.

The church continues to depend on the support of the Friends for the fully effective conservation and maintenance of the church building and its surroundings, in the interests of the community and for posterity; and the PCC has formally expressed its special thanks to the Friends for the vital support that you all give.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends will be held on **Friday 8 May 2015 at Polstead Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

An agenda for the AGM accompanies this report to members.

The formal business will be followed by a **supper** (tickets £7.50 available at Polstead Community Shop or from Bill Wigglesworth or any member of the Committee) after which **Roy Tricker**, the unrivalled expert exponent on Suffolk churches and the history of the church in Suffolk, will be giving us the benefit of his wit and knowledge of the goings on surrounding the creation of the diocese of Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich a hundred years ago.

All members and supporters, and anyone interested in becoming a Friend, are welcome to attend. Do encourage others to come and support us.

Bill Wigglesworth, Chairman
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FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH, POLSTEAD

ACCOUNTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2014

	Yr 2014	Yr 2013
Income		
Donations	£ 14492.00	£ 7882.00
Fund Raising/AGM	£ 1374.86	£ 1515.85
IR Gift Aid	£ 1140.07	£ 6101.10
Bank Interest	£ 17.86	£ 16.55
Total	£ 17024.79	£15515.50
Expenditure		

Trips/AGM	£ 595.00	£ 1363.40
Restoration	£ 6196.62	£21187.62
Total	£ 6791.62	£22551.02
Surplus/Deficit	£ 10233.17	£(7035.52)
Cash Reserves at start of year	£ 27497.02	£34532.54
Cash Reserves at year end	£ 37730.19	£27497.02
represented by:		
Current Account	£ 24650.22	£14434.91
Creditors(Unpresented cheques)	£ -	£ -
Deposit Account	£ 1220.97	£ 4608.11
Major Projects Reserve	£ 11859.00	£ 8454.00

Auditors Report

I have examined the books and bank statements relating to these accounts and, in my opinion, these accounts represent a true record of the Friends of St Mary's Church, Polstead finances for the financial year ended 31 October 2014.

..... Luke Potter, Independent Examiner

Friends of Polstead Church

Members (as at 31 October 2014)

Benefactors	Mr & Mrs Richard Bartlett	Prof Gorrod
	Mr & Mrs Henry Engleheart	Mr & Mrs Toby Owles
Donors	Mr & Mrs John Baxter	Mr & Mrs James Jacklin
	Mr & Mrs Lea Blackham	Adam & Kate Kerr
	Mr & Mrs Richard Blatch	Mrs Pat Lewis
	Mr & Mrs Nick Bonnar	Mr Richard MacGregor
	Dr Roger & Dr Annette Bray	Mr & Mrs Alastair MacWillson

Mrs Patricia Brown	Mr & Mrs Duncan McRae
Mr & Mrs John Buck	Mr & Mrs Bruce Martin
K. Chamberlain & S. Everington	Mr & Mrs Simon Oldrey
Mr Michael Connellan	Mr & Mrs Michael Parry-Crooke
Mr & Mrs F W Cross	Mr & Mrs Brian Richford
Mr & Mrs Julian Coulson	Mrs Gale Scott
Mr & Mrs Michael Goldsmith	Mr & Mrs Patrick Scrivens
Mr & Mrs Lionel Hatch	Mrs Solomon
Mr & Mrs Alan Humphryes	Mr & Mrs Paul Trudgett
Mr & Mrs Bill Wigglesworth	

Members	Mr & Mrs David Allerton	Mr Colin Lewis
	Mr & Mrs Andrew Bardell	Mr & Mrs Ray Lowe
	Mr Lewis Beddison	Caroline Mansfield
	Mrs J Biggs	Mr & Mrs Stuart Miller
	Mrs Ruth Crabtree	Mr & Mrs John Mills
	Mr Leslie Creevy	Mr George Mills
	Mr & Mrs Robert Derbyshire	Mr & Mrs Martin Mitchell
	Mr & Mrs Bill Dodd	Mr & Mrs Melvin Mitson
	Mr Richard English	Mrs Mary Murray
	Mr & Mrs Michael Evans	Margaret Newman
	Dr John & Dr Mandy Flather	Mr Brian Orriss
	Pera Francis	Mrs Erica Pomerans
	Mr & Mr Roger Freeman	Mrs B Radford
	Julia Gorrod-Wailes	Mr Tim Rouse
	Mrs Anne Hagger	Mr & Mrs Martyn Rudkin
	Mr & Mrs Barrie Hall	Mr R Sandford
	Mr & Mrs A Hands	Mr & Mrs Les Sidaway
	Mr & Mrs Ed Hynard	Mr & Mrs Donald Simpson
	R. Graham & C. Digby-Rogers	Mr A Webster

Honorary President Mr Toby Owles

Honorary Vice-Presidents Dr Ronald Blythe
 Mr Henry Engleheart
 Sir Simon Jenkins